

Appointment

From: Sanchez, Yolanda [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=473C34AE73994A4A8ACAFE6F03E0BAEB-SANCHEZ, YOLANDA]
Sent: 4/16/2019 12:23:03 AM
To: LEE, LILY [LEE.LILY@EPA.GOV]
BCC: R9SF-Room-10314-8-LakeMead [R9SF-Room-10314-8-LakeMead@epa.gov]
Subject: HPNS | Responses to Qs from Inside EPA reporter
Attachments: RE: Hunters Point query
Location: R9SF-Room-10314-8-LakeMead
Start: 4/15/2019 11:00:00 PM
End: 4/15/2019 11:30:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Required Attendees: LEE, LILY

November 14, 2018

Inside EPA, Suzanne Yohannan

I was wondering if Region 9 can comment on a report issued last week (dated Oct. 18) by the Committee to Bridge the Gap. It's the third in a series on Hunters Point, and is titled: Hunters Point Shipyard Cleanup Used Outdated and Grossly Non-Protective Cleanup Standards. See:

<http://committeetobridgethegap.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/HuntersPtReport3CleanupStandards.pdf>

It says the Navy used outdated cleanup standards -- both building PRGs and soil PRGs -- at the site, rather than EPA's updated PRG calculators to establish and evaluate cleanup standards. EPA has told the Navy to use the updated versions, but the Navy has not. In addition, the authors of the report ran EPA's PRG and BPRG calculators for the site, finding that they far exceed risk levels deemed acceptable by EPA under CERCLA.

Could you respond to these findings?

Also, given the Navy has not heeded EPA's advice to use updated PRG calculators/ levels, instead using a building guidance document (AEC guidance document) dating back to the 1970s that was based on detection capabilities at the time, and a 27-year old soil PRG, does EPA plan to take any action to compel the Navy to change its calculators and cleanup levels? What recourse does EPA have? Is EPA allowing the military to do this same thing elsewhere? The report contends that the Navy is violating Superfund law by using outdated calculators. Do you agree?

Response:

Below are responses to your questions. Please attribute to the agency and not a specific individual.

Question: I was wondering if Region 9 can comment on a report issued last week (dated Oct. 18) by the Committee to Bridge the Gap. It's the third in a series on Hunters Point, and is titled: Hunters Point Shipyard Cleanup Used Outdated and Grossly Non-Protective Cleanup Standards. See:

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It says the Navy used outdated cleanup standards -- both building PRGs and soil PRGs -- at the site, rather than EPA's updated PRG calculators to establish and evaluate cleanup standards. EPA has told the Navy to use the updated versions, but the Navy has not.

EPA Response: The original cleanup standards did consider EPA PRG Calculator risk estimates that were current at that time. As we would do at any Superfund site, EPA has stated that the site testing and cleanup, including retesting of previous radiological work, must meet cleanup standards that are demonstrated to be protective using EPA's current risk evaluation tools. As part of its Five-Year Review, which is standard for any Superfund site that has waste remaining on-site, the Navy is now evaluating existing radiological cleanup standards using the current EPA PRG Calculator. This process requires a thorough, detailed, technical review which the Navy and EPA are currently doing.

Any concerns about cleanup standards or data falsification would not impact the health of current residents in Parcel A or the surrounding community. The areas under question are enclosed under protective covers (such as pavement, clean soil, or building foundations) or inside locked buildings in secured parts of the site outside of Parcel A (the residential area). Independent radiological monitoring of dust, groundwater, ground surfaces, and fence lines have shown that health-based standards are met, and independent third-party contractors routinely conduct in-person observations of current radiological cleanup work. **The public is not at risk while the evaluation and retesting proceeds.**

Question: In addition, the authors of the report ran EPA's PRG and BPRG calculators for the site, finding that they far exceed risk levels deemed acceptable by EPA under CERCLA. Could you respond to these findings?

EPA Response: The EPA recommends using its Preliminary Remediation Goals (PRG Calculator) online tool to estimate risks under different scenarios. The report used default assumptions in the risk model. The EPA Users Guide stresses the importance of using site-specific parameters in the PRG Calculator, as opposed to default parameters that may not reflect likely exposures and can provide misleading results. When the Navy provides its draft analysis in the next draft version of the Five-Year Review, EPA and other regulatory agencies will provide review and comments regarding the acceptability of the analysis.

Question: Also, given the Navy has not heeded EPA's advice to use updated PRG calculators/ levels, instead using a building guidance document (AEC guidance document) dating back to the 1970s that was based on detection capabilities at the time, and a 27-year old soil PRG, does EPA plan to take any action to compel the Navy to change its calculators and cleanup levels? What recourse does EPA have? Is EPA allowing the military to do this same thing elsewhere?

The report contends that the Navy is violating Superfund law by using outdated calculators. Do you agree?

EPA Response: As stated previously, the Navy is currently evaluating its radiological cleanup standards using the current version of the EPA PRG Calculator. EPA expects that similar evaluations should occur at any Superfund site as part of the standard Five-Year Review process, using site-specific parameters, in accordance with EPA national guidance.